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AUTHOR McKiernan, Rogene
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ABSTRACT

Expeditionary learning creates a learning environment in which teachers and students together take a journey into an area with many unknowns for the purpose of promoting self-discovery. Of the 10 principles of expeditionary learning, 7 closely match the practices of Outward Bound. As Outward Bound staff designed an inservice program on expeditionary learning for teachers, the process of incorporating expeditionary learning principles, particularly the one known as "the having of wonderful ideas," stimulated a significant change in instruction. The recognition that conventional teaching uses explanation and demonstration with litt e time for experimentation and reflection led the instructors to structure sequences based on student discovery first, with instructor information given in response to students' experiences. Personal experience in leading expenditionary learning training courses led to incorporating expeditionary learning design principles into the Environmental Conservation Outdoor Education Expedition at Western Illinois University. This program involved a transition from conventional university relationships to the expeditionary learning model, wherein students participate in curriculum development and implementation and instructors are not the primary providers of information nor the dominant determiners of outcomes. Included are university students' reflections on the process and outcomes of their experiences with self-directed learning, and suggestions for others who may become involved in expeditionary learning. (TD)

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Chapter 10

THE INFLUENCE OF EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING IN OUTWARD BOUND AND COLLEGE

Rogene McKiernan

RC 020687

Rogene McKiernan is the instructor and coordinator of the Environmental Conservation Outdoor Education Expedition of Western Illinois University. She holds an MS from the same institution in Recreation and Park Management and a BA from Graceland College in Religion. Rogene is also an instructor for Voyageur Outward Bound School and for the Wilderness Education Association. Her experiences teaching in these settings continue to drive her desire to find more effective ways to educate university students.

In her chapter, Rogene tells the story of the unexpected influence of Expeditionary Learning in two settings for which it was not designed. In the first, Outward Bound training sessions for Expeditionary Learning teachers from a school system rebound and force the instructors to reexamine their own practice. In the second, Rogene, with the help of students, tells the story of Expeditionary Learning introduced as a principle vehicle for instruction in a university program. These stories are important because they illustrate the intrinsic power and adaptability of experiential models like Expeditionary Learning. The stories are also significant because they reveal the difficulties which must be overcome by students and teachers when methods of instruction change.

Introduction

Expeditionary Learning grew out of a proposal for change in the educational system. At the request of President Bush in 1992, a fund-raising group, The New American Schools Development Corporation, made available $40 million for ideas and plans "to create an unconventional school on a conventional budget" (New Designs, 1992). Outward Bound USA, working in conjunction with Harvard University, presented a proposal for Expeditionary Learning. Of the 600 proposals submitted, 11 were chosen, including the one by Outward Bound. In this way, Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound: A New American Schools Development Corporation "Break the Mold" Design came into being. Selected schools across the United States were chosen to begin implementation. Teacher education and training included a wilderness expedition with various Outward Bound Schools. Minnesota's Voyageur Outward Bound School (VOBS) provided several such teacher-training courses within the educational community of Dubuque, Iowa.

I was a VOBS staff member in that training work, and in this article I use that vantage point to describe two unexpected effects of work with Expeditionary Learning. Training teachers on wilderness expeditions forced VOBS instructors to reexamine the relationships between Outward Bound and Expeditionary Learning principles, and also to reconsider the nature of their work as instructors. Those relationships will be described. My experience of Expeditionary Learning was so powerful that I decided to use its principles in a college course I also teach. That experience and students' reactions to it form the second part of this chapter.

Expeditionary Learning—An Overview

Expeditionary Learning postulates that:

> True learning is an expedition into the unknown. Expeditionary learning organizes students' education into purposeful expeditions of inquiry, discovery and action. Expeditions are journeys undertaken by tightly organized groups for a specific purpose, often in the accompaniment of an expert guide. Though they may vary in length, they have a beginning, a middle and an end. They immerse people right from the start, travel light, and go somewhere. Expedition members must depend upon one another to fulfil their mission because they are travelling through uncharted territory to new destinations. They must prepare for the journey, develop goals in order that their actions have clear, recognizable consequences, and celebrate their achievements. Expeditionary Learning utilizes personal experience and intellectual growth to promote self-discovery and knowledge. (VOBS, 1993, p. 1)

Expeditionary Learning specifies Ten Design Principles to be used in planning:

The Primacy of Self-Discovery	Collaboration and Competition
The Having of Wonderful Ideas	Diversity and Inclusion
The Responsibility for Learning	The Natural World
Intimacy and Caring	Solitude and Reflection
Success and Failure	Service and Compassion

(VOBS, 1993, p. 1)

These principles are implemented by teachers who become guides or facilitators. As lifelong learners themselves, they are responsible for helping create learning opportunities by clarifying and focusing student efforts, celebrating ideas and accomplishments, helping design relevant and appropriate evaluations, and developing their own Expeditionary Learning curriculums. They are not the primary source of information or knowledge for their students, but a valuable support for information and educational processes.

The structure of student-centered learning is based on the above design principles and three basic assumptions: all students can learn, success breeds success, and parents and communities are part of the process that enhances student learning (VOBS, 1993). Expeditionary Learning provides choices which are structurally and developmentally appropriate for the ages of the pupils and their educational experience. In this framework, students can be highly involved in designing their own content, determining how to learn the desired material, and assessing their progress.

Expeditionary Learning and Outward Bound

Comparing Outward Bound Practice with Expeditionary Learning

The VOBS instructors wanted to determine the extent to which the Expeditionary Learning Design Principles were already reflected in Outward Bound practice, identifying which ones were basic to our process and which were not used well. This knowledge would help us find points of transference for the Dubuque educators who were already acquainted with the principles. Members of the VOBS Expeditionary Learning team focused on this task. The following is a summary of their work and related discussions by other VOBS staff members.

As expected, there was a good fit between the Outward Bound Process and the Expeditionary Learning Design Principles. Seven principles match Outward Bound practice closely. These will be outlined briefly. The remaining three, which fit less well and which provoked the most learning for us, will be discussed in more detail.

The primacy of self-discovery is achieved by placing students in situations in which they encounter aspects of themselves and others that they don't normally face. This includes any activity that challenges perceived limits and boundaries. We help create the setting where students can face and overcome fear, learning that they can do more than they think they can. We then call attention to what is taking place and being discovered, validating the discovery by the students.

The responsibility for learning is accomplished at VOBS by starting all courses with goal setting, and clarifying what students want to accomplish. We check during the course to see how they are progressing. Our style is to give skills training, share our knowledge, and pull back from the responsibility of directing specifics, thus granting students free space to take responsibility for their learning.

Success and failure, as a design principle in Expeditionary Learning, are described:

> All students must be assured a fair measure of success in learning in order to nurture the confidence and capacity to take risks and rise to increasingly difficult challenges. But it is also important to experience failure, to overcome negative inclinations, to prevail against adversity and to learn to turn disabilities into opportunities. (VOBS, 1993, p. 2)

Outward Bound operates out of the concept that choices have consequences and that we have to accept responsibility for both. We are conscious of consequences and manage them purposefully. Most of the activities on courses provide situations for success because students use newly learned skills in their decision making, and find taking risks rewarding. Neither Expeditionary Learning nor Outward Bound have clear definitions of "failure" or "mistakes." Outward Bound students certainly do experience mistakes, burned noodles for example, but what constitutes failure is difficult to determine because the consequences of error are invariably turned into positive learning.

Collaboration and competition are another polar pair constituting a design principle. Collaboration is one of Outward Bound's core operating values. It is exemplified by the frequently stated adage at course start: "You're in this together; you need to support each other to bring your *group* through the course!—you need each other." Outward Bound and Expeditionary Learning both emphasize competition with one's personal best, and against one's own perceived limitations and prejudices.

Intimacy and caring are fostered by Expeditionary Learning by using small groups where trust, sustained caring, and mutual respect can develop under the guidance of a caring adult (VOBS, 1993). Outward Bound operates in the same ways, developing mutual support. Caring, in this sense, is an area of high compatibility with Expeditionary Learning expectations. Intimacy is more difficult to achieve unless the concept is one simply of close proximity. School groups in Expeditionary Learning have greater opportunities for intimacy because of being together for longer periods of time.

The natural world is critical to Outward Bound because the outdoors and wilderness heightens disequilibrium and a sense of separation from everyday life. This stimulates feelings of connectedness, and a healing of the inner spirit. Outward Bound needs to broaden its environmental education components to help students understand, as well as feel, their connection with the natural world.

Solitude and reflection are found in Outward Bound in the forms of solos and quiet time during wilderness travel. Reflection is supported by posing questions to consider, giving instruction in how to give and take feedback, holding frequent group debriefs, and writing journals.

The remaining three Design Principles from Expeditionary Learning fit Outward Bound practice less well. Two of them are difficult to adjust, as will be shown. But the third stimulated a significant change in our instruction.

Diversity and inclusivity are required by Expeditionary Learning.

> Encourage students to investigate, value and draw upon their own histories, talents and resources together with those of other communities and cultures. Keep the schools and learning groups heterogeneous. (VOBS, 1993, p. 2)

Outward Bound is good at fostering divergent thinking in problem-solving situations, at making sure people are included physically in group activities, and at monitoring inclusion in group discussions. But with the exception of special populations in dedicated courses, Outward Bound serves fairly homogeneous groups. The range of cultural diversity is small and, consequently, it is difficult for Outward Bound to demonstrate this principle in action.

Service and compassion as described by Expeditionary Learning are equally difficult to demonstrate fully in Outward Bound. The Design Principle states that, "We are crew, not passengers, and are strengthened by acts of consequential service to others" (VOBS, 1993). Compassion is a corner stone of Outward Bound, from the small things like baking apple turnovers for students after solo, to spending hours helping students to work through personal problems. Service is something we work hard at doing, yet we

struggle with finding ways of extending service beyond the wilderness experience.

The having of wonderful ideas is the Design Principle which had led us to examine our practices and make adjustments. The principle is based on the work of Eleanor Duckworth (1987).

> Teach so as to build on . . . curiosity about the world by creating learning situations that provide matter to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of what is observed. Foster a community where students' and adults' ideas are respected. (VOBS, 1993, p. 2)

Outward Bound expeditions do provide time to experiment and reflect on experience, but we felt, as we examined our instructional practice, that we do not teach from this principle. We generally present "a way" to do something when teaching a skill like setting up a tent. We don't often develop opportunities for students to experiment with the dynamics of a situation, then reflect on the outcomes, determine what their next step could be, and try again. Implementing the principle of having wonderful ideas became an area of experimentation and excitement for us as we designed several field components to implement this principle.

For example, paddling is normally taught by explanation and demonstration. Students then copy our example, practice, receive feedback, and work toward proficiency. We decided instead to structure the sequence based on student discovery first, with instructor information given in response to students' experiences. Students were instructed to figure out how their actions with the paddle moved the canoe. To do this, they would play with their paddles, moving the canoes with every stroke they could imagine, while they observed what was happening. They were encouraged to be creative in their exploration and were expected to articulate the result of their actions on their canoe's movement in the water. Students then came back together as a larger group to share what had occurred, to exchange wonderful ideas about making a canoe move. In the large group, questions were asked in such a way as to validate new information gained. Students entered the canoes again to try more things, perhaps something another student had reported to produce desirable results. Discovering why the canoe behaved the

way it did led to being able to move the canoe in a desired direction. Instructors became a resource for additional knowledge and a source of assurance that the learning would help students become good paddlers.

VOBS Staff Prepares to Train Expeditionary Learning Teachers

Members of VOBS Community Education staff had anticipated the unique opportunities present in the training expeditions for Dubuque school personnel. They had deliberately pooled senior instructors to work all three Expeditionary Learning training courses and provided time before the first course and also between courses to design curriculum out of a shared vision. These two components, senior staff and planning time, plus working with intact groups from the same community over a period of three months, were novel for Outward Bound instructors. Instructors usually work with different partners for each course, disallowing continued collaboration on curriculum development. Outward Bound course groups are generally made up of strangers who come together only for that wilderness experience; they do not come with a common history, return to work with each other, or live in the same communities. Generally, Outward Bound instructors do not have a new curriculum focus to develop, implement, reflect upon, and try again with the same population who are also exploring their own educational process.

During the spring months prior to the courses, the designated VOBS instructors received literature on Expeditionary Learning. Only one of the instructors had any previous knowledge of the project. We were somewhat skeptical of a new educational fad. Materials compiled into a manual by VOBS, although interesting, gave little direction. Much of the open, honest questioning of our learning process was possible because, as senior instructors, we felt confident to operate a sound, educational Outward Bound course. We were excited about looking at what we do from another viewpoint. We were trying to use our comparison of Outward Bound practice and the Design Principles to express our practice in the language of those principles. Basically, we became learners

experiencing disequilibrium, scrambling to make sense of all the data, knowledge, and new demands in the light of our own past experiences. We were setting out on our own Expeditionary Learning journey.

VOBS Staff Reflect on the Preparation

A cooperative environment was present in our planning, despite disagreement, confused communication, and the struggle to be open to different ideas. But our environment was deliberately focused on solving problems and structuring a learning experience that would meet the needs of the Dubuque educators. Unique challenges for us were understanding the ten Design Principles of Expeditionary Learning, being open and honest about our weaknesses in light of the principles, developing new language, being transparent, and altering our course components to reflect teachers' concerns and feedback when appropriate.

The desire to offer the teachers more than a wilderness Outward Bound course and the need to find common language were the driving forces for our course preparation. Many models of education were considered for their potential to enhance transference of Outward Bound practice into language familiar to educators in the mainstream. We found that Nadler and Luckner (1992) introduced one framework that made sense to the teachers and reflected our own journey during the summer courses.

> The student experiences a state of disequilibrium by being placed in a novel setting and a cooperative environment while being presented with unique problem solving situations. These situations may lead to feelings of accomplishment which are augmented by processing the experience which promotes generalization and transfer for future life endeavors. (p. 9)

A form created by the Dubuque schools for developing a unit of study was a second piece that was useful in our planning in language familiar to the teachers.

It was a challenge for us to make our work transparent. We wanted the teachers to have an Outward Bound course that would

enable them to gain personally from the experience, and also understand an expedition. The teachers needed to understand the reasons for our actions, in order to transfer the relevant pieces to their own future classroom expeditions. These two desires, meeting teachers' personal needs and helping them understand the professional process, pushed us to go beyond our usual practice. We had to help the teachers understand the essence of what was happening while they were immersed in the process. We anticipated that they would be watching to see how and why we worked the way we did. We hoped the teachers would analyze whether we were doing what we said we were doing, and sort through the experience for points of transference. It became apparent immediately that, for us as instructors, it meant being open to questions at all times. We needed to be aware of and understand our own process in order to clarify it, and we had to be willing to join the teachers in mutual exploration. It meant that the teachers had to wear two hats: be an Outward Bound student and be an analytic teacher in training. We did not want them to go away being Outward Bound converts, but having a much broader vision and passion for their own work.

Besides transparency, new language also included "discovery learning" and "the having of wonderful ideas" (Duckworth, 1987). Learning how to structure sessions based on student discovery rather than instructor explanation was exciting and renewing. It became apparent that discovery was best done within structure rather than with no apparent boundaries. Determining what we needed as bottom-line adherence and articulating expected outcomes was an exercise that required us to creatively design learning opportunities based on knowledge and experience, tempered with new information and needs. Celebrating ideas was a wonderful way to validate ourselves and our potential.

Similar feelings of accomplishment were evident for our students as together we created the learning environment and fully immersed ourselves in the possibilities of each day. When we all came off course and spent time together reflecting on what had happened, it became evident that the instructors felt renewed, challenged, and successful in their own growth. One key to those feelings was realizing that we had shared power and were free of the usual feelings of responsibility for our students' learning. We

were responsible for safety, created opportunities for learning, provided time and direction for reflection, and developed vehicles for transference while meeting VOBS's expectations for these courses. The freedom which was generated for both the participating teachers and the instructors gave space for everyone to be resource persons, seekers of involvement, and creators of options.

ECOEE Adds a New Dimension

My experience leading Expeditionary Learning training courses at VOBS led me to incorporate Expeditionary Learning Design Principles into the Environmental Conservation Outdoor Education Expedition (ECOEE). ECOEE, a Western Illinois University's field studies and travel program in the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration, aims to support professional preparation in recreation leadership through practical applications and scholarship. The program consists of a planning semester and a semester in the field. Eighteen students study theory and practice in the areas of leadership development, wilderness travel and ethics, adventure, interpretation, outdoor education, and camping.

ECOEE students desire to try their own ideas, apply what they have learned over their educational career, and become competent in areas of deep interest to them. They are developmentally ready to accept responsibility for their actions, although sometimes reluctant to do so. The instructors anticipated that, when the desire to learn and the ability to act responsibly were both present, students would take on a high level of involvement in designing their own content, determining how to learn the desired material, and assessing their progress.

In the sections which follow, the introduction of Expeditionary Learning into ECOEE is described. The first trial brought both satisfying results and difficulties. The second trial included important adjustments. Portions of a major student report are included to demonstrate the engagement of the students in their learning.

Promise and Problems in the First Generation of Expeditionary Learning

Expeditionary Learning was first introduced during the field semester, after two weeks of classwork and one month of wilderness travel. The expedition phase put the students in a situation where their environment provided them with immediate consequences for their actions; even small details became important in light of their consequences. To function in this situation, students had little choice but learn the things they needed to know about themselves and the wilderness. As a result, learning styles and behavior patterns changed dramatically, shifting from other-directed to more self-directed. Students learned to oversee their own activities, care for each other, accept responsibility for the results of their actions with the group, and apply their skills to stay safe and travel comfortably with minimal impact on the environment.

Expeditionary Learning was received with enthusiasm, skepticism, reluctance, and relief. Students were given the option to redesign classes to better fit their career or interest needs. They were encouraged to tap into the resources within the group, work together on projects, modify the schedule for the following six weeks without compromising the integrity of the field studies program, and ask for help whenever needed. Once the students clearly understood the intent of each class, their responsibility for their own learning, and the requirements set by the university, they began to explore options and develop wonderful ideas. Using successful knowledge and procedures from the first six weeks of the program, the students began to create their own curricula. The proposals they presented to instructors included revised goals, breakdown of outcomes into feasible pieces, evidence of learning, due dates for work, and relative grade weights of their work.

The resulting curricula fit into four general modes. Some students set up a convergent process to compile information they already had into usable, accessible, and expandable form. The second group chose to take what they knew, identify what they wanted to know, and set about building knowledge bridges to connect the two in a career development context. For these

students, the outcomes for the semester focused on gaining knowledge needed to realize their career goals. Accepting that the project would extend well beyond the semester, they became aware of continued learning possibilities. A third group wanted to explore areas of interest relative to individual classes, a very divergent process. Finally, a few minimized their options by choosing work of great comfort that would take little effort to complete.

Adjustments to the itinerary, generated by students, showed immediate effects. The original itinerary included wilderness trips, visits to agencies, and meetings with administrators in the recreation field. The students desired additional stops to access other resources. Positive results of the changes became evident during agency visits when some students demonstrated an enhanced interest and participated fully because of their personal focus. A less common, negative effect was lack of participation and professionalism when an agency was not perceived to be important to a student. Difficulties arose when such students were asked to be professional and support their commitment to the group itinerary. Many times the agencies were asked to flex to meet ECOEE needs rather than ECOEE adjusting to the agency's work. The group seemed to develop a general, self-centered mentality that was magnified by the student-centered Expeditionary Learning process

Another case of individualism in conflict with community appeared as students began to establish their own ways for meeting their needs by competing for agencies and resources. Some students were committed to accommodating others and meeting the needs of all, while others were more inclined to place themselves above the group, indicating that they did not accept the Design Principle of collaboration and competition. A common vision of commitment became difficult to sustain. The cooperative environment was compromised by competition for resources. Students were more individualistic than cooperative as learners. Johnson and Johnson (1990) indicate that individualistic learning is the less effective, and cooperative learning is more effective. This means that Expeditionary Learning requires that functional procedures for cooperative learning be implemented and upheld. The assumption that the students would transfer cooperative skills, developed while working together on a wilderness expedition, to a different setting without

specific guidance and training to do so was faulty. The difference between those who were willing to work cooperatively and those who preferred individual pursuits raised issues which spilled over into the entire program.

The role of the instructors shifted from being primary information sources to being facilitators who, in helping the students connect to resources, clarified procedures and outcomes, validated ideas, and shared experiences as lifelong learners. Before the shift occurred, respect was associated with an instructor's position; afterwards, it was based on personal contribution to the process. In the former role, the instructors were responsible for evaluation of performance and outcomes. In the latter role, they were not primary evaluators but conferred with students on the learning that took place and the results of their efforts, jointly determining grades to be turned in to the University.

The process of evaluation and grading, even though framed early, was difficult because standards were not consistent among students. This caused instructors and students to ponder the complexity of evaluating the process and outcomes of experiential learning in standardized terms based upon institutional structures. The central dilemma was, how can we grade process and outcomes, which are mutually dependent factors, within a system that is concerned only with outcomes?

As students struggled to find ways to express what they were learning, they turned to familiar patterns that included papers, journals, notebooks, tests, adventure site management, storytelling, and skill development. Although these were not unusual, the students found more significant meaning in their work than they had in the past. The results of the students' efforts came to represent more than just a grade; the evaluation process became a way to verify that they were, in fact, learning and attaining their goals. This was evidenced by the students' enthusiasm and sincerity during the evaluation process. According to criteria developed by Gibbons and Hopkins (1985), the students were functioning in the psychosocial mode on the scale of experientiality. This schema indicates that this psychosocial mode, the highest level of experientiality, occurs when the "students gain understanding of themselves as unique individuals, and learn to direct their own activities effectively and

responsibly" (p. 137). This understanding is the base upon which self-directed learning can take place. The ECOEE students had reached the highest level of experientiality but lacked ways to express and evaluate their learning in forms other than those which they had previously known.

Expeditionary Learning is a natural companion to academic field studies programs. It incorporates a high level of student responsibility and initiative, whether or not there is a wilderness expedition component. It requires the students to be involved in the planning of class work, invested in the process and evaluation of their efforts. The students are primary in all stages of curriculum development and implementation, and must be willing to accept consequences. The instructors are highly involved, but not the primary sources for the information or the dominant determiners of the value of outcomes or the direction of inquiry. These transitions from more conventional university relationships are not easy for students or instructors to achieve.

The Second Generation of Expeditionary Learning

Based on the evaluations and reflections of the experience of the first generation, instructors decided that Expeditionary Learning needed to be introduced during the planning semester prior to the field studies program. The students have always planned aspects of the field semester except the course content and structure, so this was a logical next step. A weekend retreat was organized to introduce Expeditionary Learning and to explore what students wanted out of ECOEE. They defined common interest in each of the content areas and established emphasis areas within each course that would satisfy student needs and university standards. A curriculum committee was established to continue the work for the rest of the semester with the goal of writing the syllabi based on desired student outcomes. Projects and concentrated learning experiences were planned into the itinerary, with the curriculum and itinerary committees collaborating on how to meet student goals within the constraints and opportunities of the field studies program.

Incorporating Expeditionary Learning in the planning semester caused the radical shift in the instructor's role to happen while still

on campus amid a conventional academic climate. Instructors had to let go of their comfortable roles in planning a course without direct student input. This required learning how to share decision-making power. The process demanded continual adjustment as the instructors needed to retain responsibility for some tasks to prevent students being overwhelmed. For example, after struggling alongside the students for almost two months, the student curriculum committee and the instructors decided that six courses was too big a project for the students to take on. The students chose to take responsibility for three and asked the instructors to format the other three. Trying to give the information needed to build a foundation for the next semester while not fully determining the completed structure of that semester demanded mutual trust. Instructors did not have all the answers and found it stimulating to share in the discovery process along with the students. This style of instruction pushed them to grow both as people and as instructors. Their efforts brought them face to face with biases and procedures picked up from their own educations in more traditional settings. The experience was both freeing and puzzling. Their desire to provide a more positive learning environment, and the belief that Expeditionary Learning would work, prompted the instructors to take the necessary risks.

There was no time in the ECOEE preparation sequence for detailed instruction about educational design. As a result, the students had to struggle to understand Expeditionary Learning while they planned the coming semester. They were trying to use a model for which there was no precedent in their backgrounds. In many ways, the students and instructors experienced similar struggles. At times, all of us felt as though we were traveling in circles as we attempted to break free from old habits. Frequent meetings among students and instructors were essential to ensure that the whole group moved together into less familiar territory. In a sense, we were on a metaphoric expedition long before our real expedition began.

University Students Reflect on Expeditionary Learning

This section is a compiled version of reports written by ECOEE students during their planning semester. It is a collective reflection on the process and outcomes of the students' experiences, the frustrations and triumphs of self-directed learning, and suggestions for others who may become involved in Expeditionary Learning. In keeping with the spirit of transferring responsibility to students, I have retained the students' voices in this section.

> We students often have the smallest, yet most important, voice in determining the direction of our education and the processes through which we learn. This is our attempt to exert influence by evaluating Expeditionary Learning at the university level as a viable educational design which harnesses the student as a resource.
>
> Imagine enrolling in a course about which you were already tremendously excited and then having your instructors ask, "What do you want to learn?" They were serious; it was not a rhetorical question. Although we were presented with what seemed to be a fairly simple task, we struggled to identify concepts and how we might make a bridge from concept to practice. We didn't know what to do; the experience was a mix of excitement and fear all at once. We wanted to know how this could be? What were our limits? How were we to be assessed? Perhaps most importantly, we wanted to know how would the instructors support us? If we could turn to them as a resource and for reassurance then, yes, we were interested, but we wanted a promise that they would be there and that they would not answer all our questions with questions. After most of these questions were answered, the class grew quiet; we began to let the concept sink in, to realize the endless opportunities while at the same time the tremendous responsibility we were taking on by becoming crew members, not just passengers!
>
> We set aside time during a weekend retreat to begin to develop curriculum for six courses. The instructors asked us to group our interests into tracks and then identify the relationship of those tracks to our courses. The format suggested by our instructors was not successful. We began to

succeed only after we had developed our own procedures for identifying interest areas, and had learned to understand our goals and the typical content of the various courses. We needed both to take responsibility for the process and to have some information in order to conceptualize what we were trying to achieve. It was through this process that we began to make use of our instructors as a resource. They contributed their expertise to help us create learning opportunities and clarify and focus our efforts. But instructors did not serve as our primary sources of information.

We were given the accreditation determinants of our Department, and those became the basis for the core components, usually accounting for 30%-40% of the course weight. We found we could legitimately pursue a tremendous range of ideas and areas of interest. At first, the number of suggestions was staggering. Feedback from the year before warned us against having too many directions of study, as this would become more than we could manage in one semester. As we discussed what we wanted to study, we began to see that it would make sense to work with others having the same interests to form more intimate groups for support, clarification of goals and ideas, balance, and evaluation.

Some of us were interested in therapeutic recreation, and that became a basic area of study with avenues of exploration reaching into other courses like camping, management of adventure recreation, and outdoor education. Others were interested in sharpening their Wilderness First Responder skills and chose that as one of their major foci for the management of adventure and wilderness leadership courses. A few students wanted to participate in multiple areas for each course. The weekend work resulted in common areas of study consolidated into tracks for each subject. Goals and objectives were written for each course, which resulted in the beginning forms of syllabi. A student's syllabus for management of adventure recreation, emphasizing a track in therapeutic recreation, might look like this:

Core Requirements 35%	Basic Rescue in Adventure 5%
Top Rope Climbing 15%	High Ropes/Teams Courses 15%
Therapeutic Recreation 30%	Resource Management 0%
Commercial Trekking and Trips 0%	Wilderness First Responder skills 0%

Each student developed a unique mix of his or her interests, to be pursued in cooperation with other students sharing similar interests. We recognized that our interests were very complex and that our directions in life were not well defined. Many of us chose to include other areas of interest in order to broaden our awareness and opportunities.

It became evident that the formation of a student curriculum committee would be necessary to facilitate the development of our interests and goals. It would require too much energy and time for us to be continually involved in curriculum development while fulfilling the tasks required for each of the other committees. Being immersed in a conventional university setting made it difficult to function freely in planning to participate in an alternative education model. To be highly self-directed required time and energy beyond what many of us reasonably had to give. We often struggled to balance the demands of the present against the demands of our future. The feeling was expressed aptly by one of the curriculum committee members, Dawn Nivinski. She wrote:

> At times I find myself feeling like an old German shepherd, set in her ways, that just doesn't want to learn a new way, give me my money's worth and teach me. At other times it's like seeing a doorway opening with all sorts of possibilities. What may be even more difficult, it's accepting the fact that we are all vulnerable and highly dependent on each other.

To manage this struggle, we asked the curriculum committee to take the ideas and guidelines from the weekend retreat and work with the student itinerary committee and instructors to make sure that our educational goals could be met during the travel semester. We also decided to take on responsibility for designing only three courses. The committee accepted the challenge to

prioritize our goals, find a balance between all our needs, and develop curricula, with our input and consensus. Although we were all aware that we were truly responsible for our own learning, something about the amount of time pressure and our constant contact with more customary academic situations prevented many of us from taking full advantage of this opportunity. Even so, the freedom to pursue our interests was exciting, and we looked forward to a semester of Expeditionary Learning.

It was clear that several Expeditionary Learning principles had been incorporated into our planning experience. "The primacy of self-discovery" was reflected in our attempt to set goals. The "having of wonderful ideas" was celebrated as we found we could legitimately pursue a tremendous range of ideas and areas of interest. "The responsibility for learning" during our planning semester varied. Some of us had adopted it more than others, depending upon our level of understanding, time, and energy. "Diversity and inclusion," "collaboration and competition," and "intimacy and caring" were all issues that we had to incorporate in order to develop the curriculum and

plan for living together. We expected these principles to remain an integral part of our communal experience.

We found that we had accepted the Expeditionary Learning assumptions that "all students can learn" and that "success breeds success" (VOBS, 1993). For us, this meant that we needed to communicate how we best learn, and to create time in our schedule to build for success. This was not an easy task because there were so many things we wanted to do in our three months. We had to constantly refer back to our priorities in order to keep things in balance and provide for different learning styles and quality assessment. Another assumption of Expeditionary Learning is that "parents and communities play a role that enhances student learning." Community began to have an impact early in the planning semester. As we moved through the planning process, we found our group to be a source of both support and conflict; because of both, we began to feel connected. We knew from the accounts of past ECOEE programs that the twenty of us could develop into a community that would be very supportive and confrontive, enjoyable and frustrating, as well as all-consuming and temporary. We anticipated that, as with the past groups, the formation of our primary community would have a strong impact upon our courses of study. A secondary aspect of community involved our expectations for meeting professionals in the field, people with whom we hoped to work, in the very near future. We expected to extend community and enhance our learning through the agencies and the people we would meet along the way.

Conclusion

The principles of Expeditionary Learning, closely related to the philosophy of Outward Bound, form a process that is transferable to other educational settings. As implied by its name, Expeditionary Learning succeeds in creating a learning environment which closely resembles a wilderness expedition. The feeling of taking a journey into an area with many unknowns, teachers and students together, is duplicated. In pursuit of their goals, all are learners, all depend upon each other, and each must accept responsibility for

their own direction. A sense of commitment is developed by the students who become actively involved in their own educations.

In the past, Outward Bound enthusiasts have searched for ways to transfer what they experienced to other educational systems. In this case, it was the Outward Bound instructors, dedicated to helping school teachers understand expeditions, who became learners themselves. In the process, they become committed to Expeditionary Learning. They also caught the excitement of the Dubuque teachers and realized the possibilities Expeditionary Learning presents for other settings.

Expeditionary Learning was intended for elementary and secondary students, but we have found that it excites students beyond that age group. A field-studies program in a university provided a dynamic environment well suited for Expeditionary Learning. Students and instructors recognized opportunities they had been unaware of and had the freedom to choose whether or not to investigate them. However, this flexible structure was difficult for some students to manage, especially those who were dependent upon clearly defined, authoritative assignments. Being a self-contained unit allowed ECOEE to pursue Expeditionary Learning undiluted by other institutional demands. The professional community in the field was valuable in helping to define and meet educational goals. It would have been a benefit to make better use of this resource by consulting outside practitioners during the planning semester. In the future, as a network supporting Expeditionary Learning at the university level develops, we anticipate that students will become much better equipped to be lifelong learners.

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